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WRATH OF THE  
RIGHTEOUS

# PLAYER'S GUIDE

# Wrath of the Righteous

## Player's Guide

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# WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

**T**he Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path begins with the launch of the Fifth Mendevian Crusade soon after a devastating attack on the Worldwound border by the demon armies. From this explosive beginning, a new group of heroes rises—heroes who are destined for legendary achievements. But will these heroes' righteous wrath be enough to stop the full fury of the Abyss?

## CHARACTER TIPS

How should you prepare for the dangers that await you in the Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path? Just keep the following in mind when creating your character. These hints, suggestions, and character options are designed to help you create characters perfectly suited to jumping right into—and excelling over the course of—this mythic campaign.

**Alignment:** The theme of good versus evil is paramount throughout Wrath of the Righteous, more so than law versus chaos. Good-aligned characters make the most sense for this Adventure Path, be they lawful,

neutral, or chaotic. Whether you play a lawful good hero or a character with more flexible morals, it's important that your character be easily motivated to go to the Worldwound and fight demons. It's also a good idea, as in any campaign, to make your choice in a way that won't be disruptive to the party. The disruption caused by bringing different alignments into the party will vary from group to group, so the best way to make sure that your choice works is to talk with your group about what you're planning.

**Bringing Friends:** Friendly NPCs will be playing significant roles as allies throughout the Adventure Path, but that doesn't mean you can't bring your own friends. Small or Medium eidolons and animal companions will be more appropriate early in the campaign, and as early as the second adventure, larger companions and mounts will have numerous chances to shine. There are elements of travel, so you don't need to elave your mount at home.

**Classes:** Wise generals use every tool available, and as such all disciplines are used in the fight against the demons of the Worldwound. You can find a place for a

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### WANT TO READ MORE?

A number of other books can help accent your Wrath of the Righteous campaign, and some are necessary. With this being the mythic Adventure Path, *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* is a requirement to run the Adventure Path as it is intended. Certain elements in *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Campaign* will see use in the Adventure Path as well, such as the downtime system and mass combat. Listed below are other sources that aren't strictly necessary, but can greatly enhance the experience of playing through this Adventure Path.

### FOR GAME MASTERS

To learn more about the Worldwound and its denizens and dangers, check out *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Worldwound*. To learn more about the demons themselves, look through *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Demons Revisited*. To learn more about the Abyss and demonkind, grab a copy of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Book of the Damned Vol. 2, Lords of Chaos*. To enhance handing out treasure, pick up *Pathfinder Cards: Wrath of the Righteous Item Cards*.

### FOR PLAYERS

To help with the fight against the demons of the Worldwound, check out *Pathfinder Player Companion: Demon Hunter's Handbook*. Tips and additional rules for playing creatures of a good alignment appear in *Pathfinder Player Companion: Champions of Purity*. More about knightly orders and the crusaders of Mendev can be found in *Pathfinder Player Companion: Knights of the Inner Sea*. To help with exploring what it is to be a mythic character, look to *Pathfinder Player Companion: Mythic Origins*.

character of any class in Wrath of the Righteous, but some choices might seem especially appropriate. The paladin is an obvious choice, but any good-aligned religious class is certainly appropriate. This includes clerics (particularly with martial archetypes, like Crusader), inquisitors, or even oracles with the battle mystery. Cavaliers also make fine crusaders, particularly those sworn to the order of the star or to the various battlefield orders. Rangers who choose evil outsiders as their favored enemies are also particularly valuable. Though much of this Adventure Path concerns itself with martial elements and divine magic, it doesn't leave out arcane casters. Sorcerers and wizards with talents for conjuration will find places to shine in the Adventure Path, and knowledge of the planes is important for those who fight against demonkind.

As you contemplate what class your character will be, consider the new options you will potentially have from *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures*. Mythic paths are not tied to specific classes, but certain classes get more benefit out of particular paths.

**Crusading Faiths:** The faiths of Abadar, Iomedae, Sarenrae, Shelyn, and Torag are the most active among the crusaders of Mendev, although those of other good deities and empyreal lords (particularly Desna or the Empyreal Lord Pulura) have important roles to play as well. Faith in a deity is not required, but many of the allies and resources you'll be encountering have ties to the good deities of Golarion.

**Demons and Other Foes:** Demons are the primary foes you'll be facing in Wrath of the Righteous, but chaotic evil outsiders are far from the only enemies you'll encounter. Humans, dwarves, and native outsiders are common as well, in the form of cultists and other opponents. Undead, aberrations, magical beasts, and vermin enemies will also be encountered relatively often.

**Origins:** People from all over the Inner Sea find their way north to Mendev, offering their swords to fight against the demons of the Worldwound. As such, your character can reasonably originate from anywhere in the Inner Sea. The Adventure Path begins in the crusader city of Kenabres, so make sure that your character has a reason to enlist in the fight and venture to Kenabres. The campaign begins on a holy day, so perhaps your character made a pilgrimage to Kenabres to celebrate the day prior to swearing herself or himself to the cause. A short primer on the city of Kenabres is included in this Player's Guide on page 9.

**Paladins:** This Adventure Path is an excellent choice for paladin characters—not only are there a lot of foes paladins shine against, but from a roleplaying standpoint, the crusade against the Worldwound is tailor-made for paladins. Keep in mind, though, that there will be points during your adventure where things will look dark, and you will be presented with some difficult moral and ethical choices at times—in addition, make sure to read the notes on redemption on page 11.

**Races:** Outnumbered and facing an assault from evil outsiders, the crusade today has no compunctions regarding race when it comes to outfitting its forces. Able-bodied men and women from all races are welcome so long as they are willing to fight the good fight. At one time tieflings were distrusted and shunned, but now some of the fiend-blooded fight alongside aasimars while defending Mendev or striking against the horrors of the Worldwound. Many tiefling crusaders claim that their blood makes them the best suited to fighting demons, and they also have defenses that help them shrug off some of the demons' deadliest attacks.

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In addition to defending the continent from demonic horror, a fair number of dwarves who have joined the crusades battle the Worldwound in hopes of reclaiming a lost Sky Citadel within its borders.

While nearly every human ethnicity in the Inner Sea region can be counted among those who fight against the Worldwound, some say the Kellids are the most passionate about healing the Abyssal wound. Their homeland of Sarkoris fell when the Worldwound opened, and many Kellids in Mendev's army fight not only to ensure the safety of future generations, but also to redeem their ruined homeland.

**Redemption:** Not every evil NPC in Wrath of the Righteous is meant to be killed. Now and then, you'll encounter NPCs who are working hard to be redeemed, or otherwise working against their evil natures. Wrath of the Righteous will give characters several opportunities to redeem and guide NPCs and organizations alike toward the path of righteousness. Redemption might also be a personal mission for your character. Perhaps your character decided to fight for the crusades as a way to purge a tainted past.

### CAMPAIGN TRAITS

The following campaign traits tie characters to the Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path. The Adventure Path assumes that every character in the campaign has one of the following campaign traits. Choosing the best trait for your character is important, and that choice will resurface during the course of the campaign. These traits are also found in *Pathfinder Player Companion: Demon Hunter's Handbook*. While the mechanics are the same for those printed here and in the *Demon Hunter's Handbook*, the traits presented here go into more flavorful detail.

These traits explain your character's link to the Worldwound, but each trait is also associated with one of the six mythic paths—your character doesn't begin Wrath of the Righteous as a mythic character, but the results of the first adventure will catapult your character into this new realm of legendary power, setting her up for even greater challenges that await in the next five adventures of the campaign. Choosing a campaign trait that matches the mythic path you want to take will result in your campaign trait being enhanced when you do become mythic. In a way, you can consider the selection of your campaign trait as also selecting your character's mythic destiny!

As a special note, each of the following campaign traits ties into a specific encounter or plot development in the Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path—what that encounter or development might be, you'll find out as the story unfolds. As a result, it's best if every player in your

group picks a different Wrath of the Righteous campaign trait. If you and another player both want the same trait, be sure to work out a way that both of your characters took part in the same event—examples of how to do so are given for each option below.

Finally, you'll also note that these traits are a bit more powerful than most traits—this is intentional, as these traits help to set up your mythic background!

**Chance Encounter:** You always tended to get in over your head as a child, but your biggest youthful misadventure was the time you “accidentally” found yourself behind enemy lines in the Worldwound. You probably never would have made it back home to Kenabres if not for the help of a mysterious woman who helped you trick your way through a group of cultists. The woman never told you her name, but you remember her beauty and a deep sense of sadness she seemed to carry with her. Her skill with the bow was impressive as well, but the thing you remember most about her was the symbol of Desna she wore—she often held onto it without seeming to realize it, as if the connection to the goddess was something she clung to in a sense of need, as someone might clutch at a rope while dangling over a vast pit. She left your side a few moments before you were picked up by a patrol of crusaders, who finished the job of escorting you back to safety, and you've never seen her again. Ever since, you've just been lucky when it comes to trickery. Once per day, if you fail an Acrobatics, Bluff, Disguise, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth check, you may immediately reroll that check as a free action. You must take the second result, even if it is worse. *Associated Mythic Path:* Trickster. *Multiple Characters:* You and other characters were all saved by the same mysterious woman in your childhood. This could have been the same event, or she could have saved you on separate occasions—the discovery that someone else was saved by the mysterious stranger has resulted in a long friendship (or perhaps friendly rivalry) with the others she rescued.

**Child of the Crusade:** Your parents were members of the crusade, as were their parents before them. (If you are an elf, gnome, or other long-lived race, these could be brothers or cousins instead, since it's possible that the Worldwound simply didn't exist at a time before you were born.) The righteousness of the crusades sometimes feels as if it runs in your very blood, and it bolsters you against demonic influence. Your parents may be alive still, or they may have perished on a mission—that choice is up to you. You grew up knowing them, though, and their zeal and devotion to the crusade is the primary reason you feel the same way. They've told you of other family members who have also been involved in the crusade, and it's not uncommon for you to meet a distant cousin or long-lost aunt, uncle,

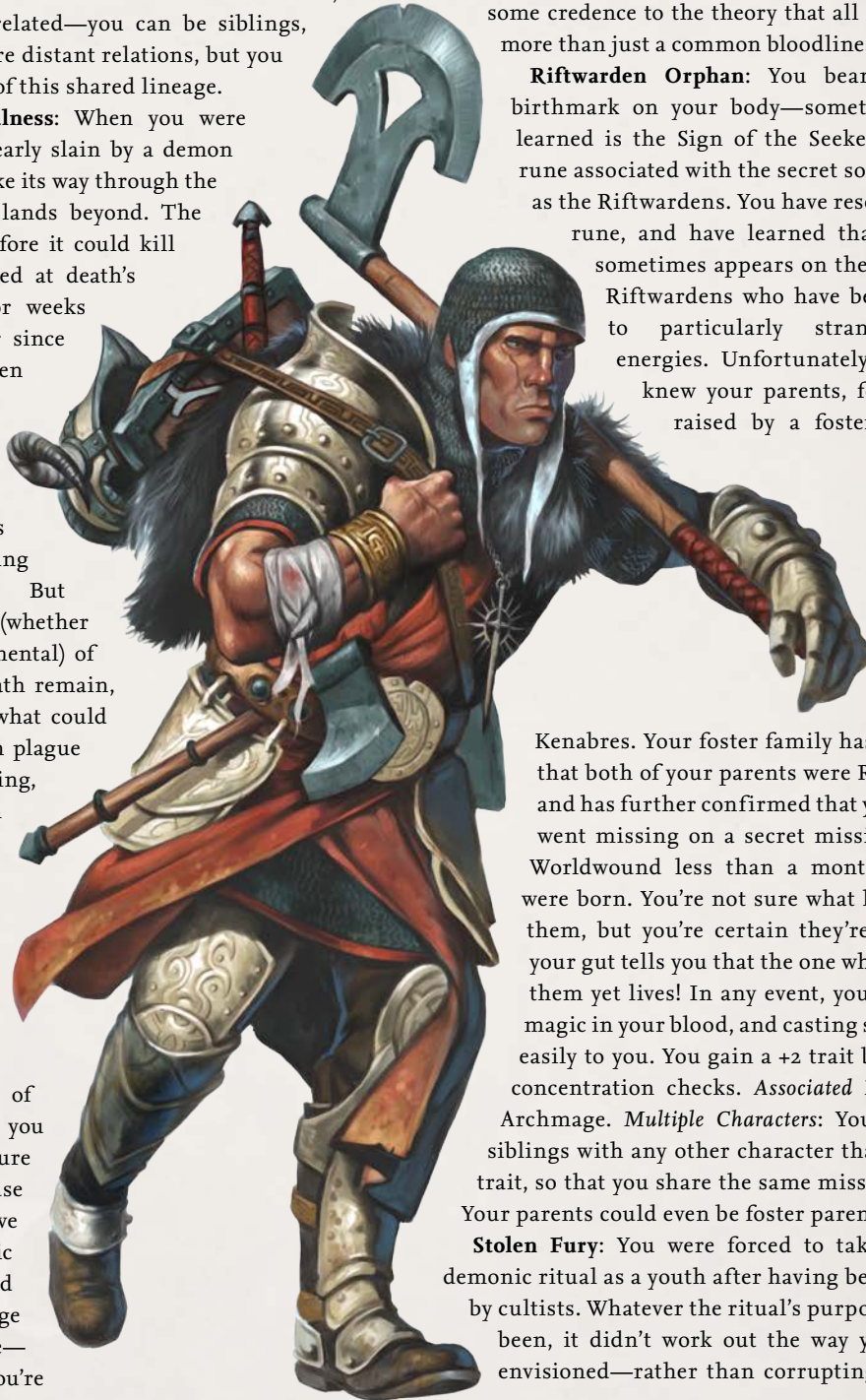
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or other family member while traveling among the border towns of Mendev. This strong family tie bolsters your mind and sense of belonging to the crusade. Once per day when you fail a saving throw against an effect created by a demon that would possess or incapacitate you mentally, you may immediately reroll that saving throw as a free action. You must take the second result, even if it is worse. *Associated Mythic Path:* Marshal. *Multiple Characters:* If other characters take this trait, you should all be related—you can be siblings, cousins, or even more distant relations, but you should all be aware of this shared lineage.

**Exposed to Awfulness:** When you were a child, you were nearly slain by a demon that managed to make its way through the *wardstones* into the lands beyond. The demon was slain before it could kill you, but you lingered at death's door in a coma for weeks before waking. Ever since then, you've been unusually hale and hearty, as if your body had endured its brush with awfulness by becoming supernaturally fit. But still, the scars (whether physical or purely mental) of your brush with death remain, and nightmares of what could have happened often plague your sleep. Something, be it your own personal force of will, some strange "infection" from the assault, or perhaps a combination of both, has made you stronger than before. You're not sure what to make of the theories that you survived this exposure to awfulness because you yourself have some trace of demonic heritage that helped give you the advantage you needed to survive—but whatever it was, you're

glad for it! Your strange resistance to demonic attacks persists to this day. Once per day when you fail a saving throw against an effect created by a demon that would kill or physically incapacitate you, you can immediately reroll that saving throw as a free action. You must take the second result, even if it is worse. *Associated Mythic Path:* Guardian. *Multiple Characters:* You and any others with this trait are related, if only distantly. You could be siblings or cousins—a condition that perhaps lends some credence to the theory that all of you share more than just a common bloodline.

**Riftwarden Orphan:** You bear a strange birthmark on your body—something you've learned is the Sign of the Seeker's Spiral, a rune associated with the secret society known as the Riftwardens. You have researched this rune, and have learned that the mark sometimes appears on the children of Riftwardens who have been exposed to particularly strange planar energies. Unfortunately, you never knew your parents, for you were raised by a foster family in



Kenabres. Your foster family has confirmed that both of your parents were Riftwardens, and has further confirmed that your parents went missing on a secret mission into the Worldwound less than a month after you were born. You're not sure what happened to them, but you're certain they're dead—and your gut tells you that the one who murdered them yet lives! In any event, you've long felt magic in your blood, and casting spells comes easily to you. You gain a +2 trait bonus on all concentration checks. *Associated Mythic Path:* Archmage. *Multiple Characters:* You should be siblings with any other character that takes this trait, so that you share the same missing parents. Your parents could even be foster parents.

**Stolen Fury:** You were forced to take part in a demonic ritual as a youth after having been captured by cultists. Whatever the ritual's purpose may have been, it didn't work out the way your captors envisioned—rather than corrupting your soul,

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you absorbed the ritual's energy and made it your own before you escaped to safety. Ever since, you've been haunted by strange nightmares about the ritual, and have long felt that the energies it bathed you in have changed you. Recently, those energies have changed—it's as if you've finally managed to come to terms with your past and have turned the ritual's aftereffects to your advantage, following the old adage of what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. You've been unable to learn more about the ritual or what it was for, but the question lingers in the back of your head to this day. This nagging has instilled in you a fury against demonkind. Today, when you face demons in combat, those energies bolster your fury, granting you a +2 trait bonus on all combat maneuver checks against demons. *Associated Mythic Path:* Champion. *Multiple Characters:* You and any other PC who takes this trait were all part of the same ritual, and it was only by working together that you managed to escape—further, the support of your fellow ritual survivors has played a key role in your coming to terms with it, and you retain a close bond of friendship (or perhaps a friendly rivalry) to this day.

**Touched by Divinity:** As long as you can remember, you've had an unexplainable interest in one deity in particular. One of your parents may have been a priest of this deity, or you may have been an orphan raised by the church, but these alone cannot explain your deep connection to the faith. You've always felt calm and at ease in places holy to the deity, and often have dreams about the god or goddess visiting you—most often in the form of a sacred animal or creature. Your faith is strong, even if you don't happen to be a divine spellcaster—if you are a divine spellcaster, you should be a worshiper of this deity. You begin play with a silver holy symbol of your chosen deity for free. In addition, choose one domain associated with your chosen deity. You gain the use of that domain's 1st-level domain spell as a spell-like ability usable once per day (CL equals your character level). *Associated Mythic Path:* Hierophant. *Multiple Characters:* If other characters choose this trait, you should all work together to decide what deity you're associated with—it should be the same deity shared by all of you. You might even share the same dreams.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path makes great use of two additional Pathfinder RPG books. The first of which is *Mythic Adventures* which provides the rules for mythic play. The other book that finds great use throughout the campaign is *Ultimate Campaign* for its downtime rules and mass combat system. Though your GM will find the most use of these rules, it helps for players to be versed in them as well.

### BEING MYTHIC HEROES

All characters have great potential to affect the world around them in ways both subtle and overt, but some heroes have a destiny greater still. Those heroes are fated to play instrumental parts in world-changing events. They are known as mythic heroes, and their power attracts the attention of the mighty, both good and evil. Wrath of the Righteous is designed to make use of the rules presented in *Mythic Adventures*. Although your character doesn't start out mythic, the potential lies within each one, and you will discover it soon enough.

### MASS COMBAT

When your fight against the demons of the Worldwound grows in scale, you will have the opportunity to play out battles using the mass combat rules presented in *Ultimate Campaign*. Mass combat is handled similarly to individual combat, in that the opposing armies have modifiers to attack, armies have a defensive value that acts like Armor Class, and successful attacks cause abstracted damage. Damage taken determines the disposition of the opposing army after the maneuver. The scale is much greater for mass combat than for individual combat, so much of the fun of the system comes from carefully choosing tactics and watching them play out on the field of battle.

Any PC can act as a leader in mass combat, but you can prepare your character to be particularly suited to the role. Most of the abilities that are useful in leading an armed force are Charisma-based. The Leadership feat is helpful to command, as are ranks in the Profession (soldier) skill.

### DOWNTIME

Between moments of excitement in Wrath of the Righteous you might find time for your character to practice a profession, do some research, or take part in any number of other activities. You should talk with your GM about whether you'll be using the downtime rules presented in *Ultimate Campaign*.

The downtime rules present many options for non-adventuring activities your character can engage in. They give fun and often meaningful things to do with the Profession skills and other non-combat abilities. Downtime activities can be purely for character enrichment—such as practicing a trade—or they can be in service of the party or a larger organization—like recruiting, researching enemies, or making careful plans for your next adventure. If you will be using the downtime rules, you have an extra incentive to create a well-rounded character with abilities that apply outside of combat and adventuring.

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### GATHERING INFORMATION— ENEMIES OF THE CRUSADES

While some characters in this campaign may be new to Mendev and Kenabres, other characters could have been in Kenabres for a while and picked up news and gossip on the lips of the citizens. Most of the gossip is about how the effort against the Worldwound is going, and many well-known villains pop up in conversation—mention of their names are usually punctuated with a short curse and spit upon the ground. When fighting a prolonged war against supernatural enemies, it's good to know a thing or two about some of the power players in the struggle. Below are some of the known characters leading the fight against the holy forces of Mendev.

**Aponavicius:** This marilith has ruled over Drezen since she and her armies took the city, and she frequently sends her armies of demons and cultists against the Mendevian armies.

**Areelu Vorlesh:** It's believed that this witch was partially responsible for the opening of the Worldwound. Scouts and soldiers who have ventured deep within the Worldwound say that she still lives.

**Deskari:** The demon lord of chasms, infestations, and locusts was the prime Abyssal power responsible for the Worldwound opening after Aroden's death.

**Khorramzadeh:** Also known as the Storm King, this powerful balor was responsible for attacking the *wardstone* in Kenabres.

**Minagho:** This lilitu demon is the ruler of the ruined city of Raliscrad and is responsible for training and corrupting captured crusaders.

**Staunton Vhane:** This dwarven man was recently revealed to be an antipaladin and traitor to the Mendevian crusades.

**Templars of the Ivory Labyrinth:** This group of Baphomet cultists have long worked corruption into the ranks of the crusaders.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CRUSADES

To date, four crusades have been launched against the demons of the Worldwound, and while all four have had varying degrees of success and failure, none have yet driven the armies of Deskari, Lord of the Locust Host, from Golarion. A brief history of the war follows.

**First Crusade (4622 AR–4630 AR):** Although a fair number of holy warriors came to Sarkoris's aid in the first several years after the Worldwound opened, the church of Iomedae did not declare the First Crusade until 4622 AR, as the repercussions of Aroden's death significantly delayed the church's ability to respond to the growing crisis. By the time the First Crusade

reached Mendev, the demons had long since seized control of central Sarkoris, and had claimed significant portions of Mendev as well.

The First Crusade bolstered the defenders of Sarkoris and Mendev, boosting both their numbers and morale, and the sudden increase in the enemy's strength caught the demonic horde unprepared, causing them to retreat back to the Northmounds. With Mendev and southern Sarkoris thus liberated, the crusaders remained in the region to help rebuild—an offer Mendev welcomed gratefully, but one that the disparate and proud clans of Sarkoris accepted more reluctantly. In any event, for the next few years the demons seemed content to focus their wrath upon Sarkoris's Northmounds, battling primarily with the surviving Sarkorian clans desperately attempting to reclaim their family lands, while Mendev remained relatively unmolested.

**Second Crusade (4638 AR–4645 AR):** When a second wave of demons erupted from the Worldwound in 4636 AR, the crusaders had settled into their new homes in Mendev. They again took up arms against the demons, expecting a short series of fights and boasting that this time they would drive the host back to the very edges of the Worldwound itself. But their expectations did not come to fruition. This time, the demons pouring from the Worldwound were not only more numerous—they were better prepared. Rather than the haphazard, chaotic, self-indulgent mob the crusaders previously encountered, the marauding demons were now legions driven by powerful commanders. Under their commanders' direction, the demons orchestrated strike forces, teleported behind enemy lines, drove their enemies toward their advancing ranks, and then crushed their opponents between them. The armies of the marilith Aponavicius captured the crusader city of Drezen using such tactics, forcing the church of Iomedae to finally call for the Second Crusade.

Even with the influx of troops from the Second Crusade, however, it quickly became apparent the demons were going to win. Fortunately for Mendev, the demons aimed the bulk of their devastating attack westward and southward. The impending loss prompted the leaders of the Mendevian Crusaders to make a fateful decision—they pulled their support from Sarkoris, allowing the demon army to descend on what remained of that land, and instead concentrated their efforts on erecting *wardstones* along the West Sellen and Moutray rivers. The price of their actions proved steep, but, as the *wardstones* flared to life, the menhirs contained the demons within lost Sarkoris and saved tens of thousands from grisly deaths. Yet despite this success, the near-total loss of Sarkoris is generally regarded as the final capstone on a disastrous crusade.



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**Third Crusade (4665 AR–4668 AR):** Now contained within Sarkoris by a combination of the *wardstones*, increased pressure from the Mammoth Lords, and the distraction of an entire nation to plunder, the demons continued to press against the borders but seemed largely content to revel in their captured realm. Meanwhile, as the years passed, the Mendevian crusaders grew more and more corrupt—in part due to the subtle machinations of the cult of Baphomet, which had successfully infiltrated numerous companies and faiths throughout Mendev, but also because the resource-strained church of Iomedae had increasingly accepted less trustworthy members into its war effort. The church launched the Third Crusade primarily as an attempt to galvanize the crusaders, but as its focus increasingly turned toward self-destructive witch hunts and internal squabbling, the crusade collapsed under its own corrupt weight. Ultimately, the Third Crusade accomplished very little within the Worldwound—apart from delighting and entertaining Sarkoris's demonic masters.

**Fourth Crusade (4692 AR–4707 AR):** After decades of Abyssal rule, a dangerous new addition to the demon armies arrived in the form of Khorramzadeh the Storm King. Scholars of the war are divided as to whether or not the Storm King had been ruling from Iz all along, or if he was but the latest arrival in the region. Regardless, the Storm King's first assault on the border resulted in no less catastrophic an event than the cracking of the Kenabres *wardstone*. The ferocity of this attack caught the crusaders off guard, but in the end the *wardstone* held. In response, the church of Iomedae called for the Fourth Crusade. This crusade proved to be the longest and most grueling of the crusades yet, lasting 15 years and ending more as a result of wartime exhaustion than anything else. The demons lost very little, and in the years since this crusade's whimpering conclusion, morale along the Worldwound's borders has reached an all-time low.

### KENABRES AT A GLANCE

The city of Kenabres overlooks the Worldwound from its perch on the eastern bluffs above the West Sellen river. It's the gathering place for crusaders headed into the Worldwound, and home to a resolute—if occasionally overzealous—group of defenders.

Before the Worldwound opened, spilling demonic hordes into doomed Sarkoris, Kenabres was a small and industrious town on the border. The people of old Kenabres traded up and down the river, and they drew their water from it via a cunning system of pumps and pipes. After the coming of the Worldwound, the town was overrun with refugees. The citizens of Kenabres at first took them in graciously. This initial hospitality was checked when a demonic infiltrator disguised as a refugee, slaughtered 62 citizens in early 4607 AR. Subsequent immigrants were subjected to close scrutiny and suspicion, and were forced to undergo continual invasive tests to prove their humanity.

Despite the growing difficulty of being accepted into Kenabres, refugees continued to pour in from Sarkoris. A century after the opening of the Worldwound, the town has grown into a small city. A series of walls were erected as Kenabres grew, creating several physically separate districts. Today, the more than 12,000 inhabitants live almost entirely within the fortifications, while gathering crusaders make camp outside the walls to the north of the city.

After the Second Crusade, the church of Iomedae built a stone keep to house Kenabres's *wardstone*. One of a series set along the border with the Worldwound, the *wardstone* keeps demonic forces from crossing the line between it and its neighbors, as long as its attendant priests maintain its power with prayer and ritual. Between the *wardstone* and the fortifications, Kenabres has been a relatively secure stronghold against the demons—but it has been less secure from corrupting forces within the walls. Starting with misplaced zeal in the First Crusade,

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there has been a tradition of witch hunting in Kenabres. The “witches” that have been burned at the stake in the intervening years were mostly just people who were different in faith or just physical appearance. Operating ostensibly under the aegis of the church of Iomedae, the witch hunters have often been a law unto themselves, taking whatever measures they deem necessary to keep Kenabres free of demonic corruption and possession. The prevalence of the witch hunters has waned somewhat in the years since the Fourth Crusade, but they remain at the ready to respond to any demonic threats that may arise—whether real or imagined.

Characters that were raised in Kenabres have for all their lives known the preparation for war and the threat of attack. Even the youngest adventurers from the city have seen the town grow and change in their lifetimes, and have witnessed an ever-changing collection of crusaders passing through. Living in the shadow of a demonic threat is different than living in a normal war-torn land: the looming enemy can't easily be understood or related to, nor can the demons' motivations be analyzed and exploited. Growing up with such a threat always present is sure to color the worldview of a young adventurer.

### REDEMPTION

Redemption is a major theme in *Wrath of the Righteous*, and PCs have many chances during the campaign to defeat evil with wits or words rather than swords or spells. The witch hunts of Kenabres have slowed, but corruption still plagues the crusaders, and formerly good men and women turn to evil everyday.

### PATH TO REDEMPTION

Changing alignment can be a tricky process, both in mechanical and roleplaying terms. Alignment shifts have little mechanical effect on characters of classes without alignment restrictions, so they can be as simple as the GM mentioning a drift one way or another. For some, though, redemption can be a driving force for character development or plots within a campaign. And for others, the desire to take a prestige or base class that requires characters to be good, or to use a good-aligned item, might encourage them to seek a purer path. This system presents guidelines for tracking a creature's path toward redemption. It allows for a great degree of customization and alteration to ensure it feels natural for players and fits comfortably into an ongoing campaign. But keep in mind that certain classes and other rules require a more demanding form of redemption, such as a paladin seeking atonement or a cleric or druid attempting to regain her spell powers. This system does not circumvent such requirements.

### BECOMING GOOD

Each character has her own unique path to good. Many creatures are set in their ways and don't vacillate between distinct ethical philosophies, making such a fundamental change in thinking and acting an arduous road. The notion of good is as much about intention as it is about action. Simply committing a series of good acts is not enough to change a creature's alignment—it must want deep down within itself to be good. As such, finding true redemption involves the creature passing through a number of stages on its path to goodness.

**Intention:** Determining a creature's intention is largely a roleplaying task. Creatures that truly seek redemption should display genuine remorse over evil acts they've committed and must be willing to embark on the difficult road to becoming good. If you are actively seeking to redeem a creature, there is no guarantee of success, but by offering it examples of mercy and decency you might spark a desire to do good in its heart. Many times, confessing one's past sins and evil deeds is the first step toward redemption. Purposefully completing



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at least one penance (see below) and succeeding at a Will save as outlined in the following rules should prove a creature is ready to begin its journey.

**Calculating the Path to Good:** To alter its alignment toward good, a creature must pass through a number of stages, depending on its starting alignment. A creature with an evil alignment must first shift its alignment to neutral before shifting its alignment to good. To make this shift, the creature must perform a number of penances equal to double its total Hit Dice. This number of penances must be completed for each stage of shift in alignment, from evil to neutral and again from neutral to good. If the creature seeking to become good gains additional Hit Dice or levels during the course of its redemption, the number of penances to be completed should reflect its new total Hit Dice. For example, if a creature with a total of 7 Hit Dice completes 14 penances to shift from evil to neutral, but gains a level before completing its path from neutral to good, its total Hit Dice rise to 8 and it must now complete 16 penances in order to complete its path of redemption.

For exceptionally evil creatures, a GM may wish to increase the required number of penances to reflect a life of utter depravity. For creatures with the evil subtype, their alignment is ingrained into their very soul, and the GM may rule that they are beyond redemption of this sort or at the very least a difficult and exceptional series of tasks must be completed to facilitate the change in alignment.

**Penances:** To pass through each stage of its path to good, a creature must perform a number of good deeds equal to double its total Hit Dice. The GM decides exactly which penances are appropriate, but examples of such acts are included below.

When a creature completes the penances required for a stage, it must succeed at a Will save to overcome its nature. The DC of this save is equal to  $10 + 1/2$  the creature's total Hit Dice + its Charisma modifier.

If this save is successful, the penances have taken hold and the creature has completed another step toward becoming good. If the creature fails this save, it must complete another deed in order to gain a chance to attempt another save. It can continue to complete additional deeds after each failed save until it succeeds.

**Sponsorship:** It is far easier for a creature to change its alignment with the tutelage and support of another. Someone who wishes to become good can seek out the support of a good creature to improve its own chances of success. At each stage, a creature may enlist the help of a number of sponsors up to its Charisma modifier. Each sponsor aiding a creature on its path to redemption provides a +1 bonus on the creature's Will save (or saves,

if the first save is unsuccessful) to complete that stage of its redemption.

To be a sponsor, a creature must absolutely believe in the penitent's ability and sincere intention to change its alignment. This certainty may arise from friendship, divine guidance, the application of divinations or mundane interrogation, or any other source that results in absolute conviction that the subject desires to be good.

**Relapse:** Each minor evil act a creature performs (casting spells with the evil descriptor, praying to an evil deity, using an evil magic device, mind controlling good creatures to commit evil acts, and so on) counts against whatever penances the character has already performed, effectively canceling one out. Any major evil act (knowingly slaying an innocent creature, spreading a disease among a community, inflicting pain on an innocent subject, or animating the dead) undoes all of the good work done for the current stage, and the creature must begin that stage anew. A GM may rule that a particularly heinous act reverses all work done, and shifts the creature back to its original evil alignment.

### EXAMPLE PENANCES

The list that follows represents examples of penances that you can use to pursue redemption or assign to a penitent that you're sponsoring, with your GM's permission. Your GM should avoid presenting too many options for redemption at once, as doing so would allow you to choose the easiest penance over the one most appropriate to the situation—those who truly seek to repent shouldn't shy away from a good deed because it is difficult, expensive, or not their idea of fun. It is equally important, however, to work with your GM to ensure that penances are achievable, relevant, and available at a sufficient pace, so that the process of redemption doesn't interfere with the adventure and group dynamics. Getting this balance right may be tricky, particularly if you are in a rush to become good.

- Confessing your past sins or evil acts to an appropriate good-aligned agent.
- Healing a creature you don't know from a disease, affliction, or poison when doing so gives you no personal advantage.
- Willingly submitting to a *geas/quest*, mark of justice, or similar spell to show you are committed enough to the process of redemption to risk harm if you fail.
- Casting a spell with the good descriptor. This penance can be completed only once per stage.
- Donating at least 50 gp to a good organization or faith. Each time you do so, the amount needed for the donation to qualify as a penance doubles.
- Sacrificing belongings gained through evil means.
- Freeing an oppressed, enslaved, or abused creature.

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- Preaching a sermon of no less than 1 hour on the virtues of good behavior. This penance can only be completed once per week.
- Turning a creature that has committed a crime over to a good-aligned authority.
- Completing a task or quest for a good faith or organization without accepting payment. A GM may decide that a particularly challenging encounter may count as two or more penances.
- Fasting and praying for 12 hours (leading to fatigue).
- Creating a good item and giving it away for free.
- Showing mercy to a vanquished foe.
- Completing a task for a stranger and accepting no reward.
- Refraining from blasphemy or bad language in private or in conversation with others.
- Instructing other characters or NPCs in pure courses of action.
- Ignoring or not responding to insults or challenges from foes.
- Attempting a Diplomacy check to try and resolve a situation peaceably instead of resorting to combat.
- Refraining from lying or deception for an entire week.

Many other actions that may come up in play could be considered penances, and your GM should feel free to count such deeds when they occur. The process becomes much more natural and genuine if penitent characters seek out ways to be helpful and pure, rather than simply working their way through a set list.

### HUNTING DEMONS

Player characters in *Wrath of the Righteous* will encounter their share of demons. Whether they're specifically suited to demon hunting or will be forced to adapt as the adventure unfolds, it's good for them to know their enemy.

Many crusaders have made demons their focus of study, but few did so with as much vigor and determination as a demon slayer of the last crusade named Yaniel. At some point, Yaniel was shunned and disgraced by some of her fellow crusaders, so she made the decision to go into the Worldwound alone as a means of redeeming herself. She would meditate with her sword and would purify herself with courage. Months later, she returned with a new band of crusaders thought lost to the wilds of the Worldwound. She saved these men and women from the clutches of demons and returned them safely to Mendev. Her efforts are well known by many crusaders and demon slayers who came after her, and parts of her story even became a ballad sung in taverns throughout Mendev.

After this experience, Yaniel began work on her texts explaining demonkind and the best ways to combat them. These manuscripts are still used by those who fight demons. An excerpt of her first and most basic treatise on demon slaying follows.

*Destructive and prolific, demons come from the Abyss. They temper their evil with a devotion to chaos that makes them unpredictable and deadly as well as cruel.*

*All demons are exceptionally tough. Most demons, especially more powerful ones, have the ability to shrug off wounds earned through combat, though weapons forged from cold iron and those that are imbued with the power of good can bypass this fiendish protection.*

*Demons are immune to electricity and poison, and are highly resistant to fire, cold, and acid (though some have specialized immunities that break these general standards).*

*Some demons are exceptionally durable against magic, and frequently spells targeting them will fail unless cast by a potent source. This protection varies from demon to demon, but those fighting the more powerful fiends would do well to utilize spells that bypass this magical resistance.*

*Demons can summon others of their kind to aid them in slaking their thirst for destruction. They can communicate with such allies in the Abyssal tongue, as well as in Celestial and Draconic. Many demons can even speak directly into one's mind through the use of telepathy. This ability typically extends to 100 feet or so, though more potent demons can speak into your mind from great distances.*

*Intrinsically tied to chaos and evil, these creatures are able to focus this inherent connection into their weapons. A demon's claws, teeth, and dangerous appendages, as well as any weapon the fiend wields, strike more viciously against creatures weak to evil and chaotic energies.*

*Keep these demonic standards in mind when fighting against the Abyssal shadow that falls over our realm. Use this knowledge to guide your blade and trust in the Inheritor to guide your heart. We will endure!*

## MEDALS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The leaders of the Mendevian Crusades are always on the lookout for committed crusaders and reliable adventurers who can help to turn the demonic tide at the Worldwound. Among the many ways that they recognize and encourage service is by awarding prestigious magical medals. These medals come in a variety of types, and each one provides some meaningful benefit to the wearer.

The deeds required to qualify for a righteous medal are specific and not to be taken lightly. Your character might earn one or more of them while fighting against the Abyss, but doing so is a real measure of bravery and skill. Likewise, NPCs that have earned *righteous medals* have done so at great personal risk—these are not awards that can be earned by sitting behind an army or pushing parchment.

The *righteous medal of agility* is awarded to a hero who

delivers the killing blow to a demon before that demon is able to act in combat.

The *righteous medal of clarity* is awarded to those who discover and spread vital information that helps the cause strike against the Worldwound.

The *righteous medal of command* is awarded to those who redeem enemy combatants and turn them to the side of the crusades.

The *righteous medal of spirit* is awarded to crusaders who overcome possession or mental control before being forced to do evil.

The *righteous medal of valor* is awarded to heroes who deliver the killing blows to a demon more powerful than themselves.

The *righteous medal of vigor* is awarded to crusaders who are reduced to negative hit points by demons but survive to rejoin the fight before that demon's defeat.



**RIGHTEOUS MEDAL OF AGILITY**



**RIGHTEOUS MEDAL OF CLARITY**



**RIGHTEOUS MEDAL OF COMMAND**



**RIGHTEOUS MEDAL OF SPIRIT**



**RIGHTEOUS MEDAL OF VALOR**



**RIGHTEOUS MEDAL OF VIGOR**